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Rosalie

and Other Verses, including

*Poems of
Beautiful Bathurst*

WINDSONG



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ROSALIE

AND OTHER VERSES

INCLUDING

POEMS OF BEAUTIFUL
BATHURST.

“BATCHER.”

Sydney:

—
JOHN SANDS LTD.

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1910

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PREFACE.

WITH the exception of one or two, these pieces have appeared in the "Bulletin" (Sydney), "National Advocate" (Bathurst), and "Lithgow Mercury" (Lithgow) newspapers; and I thank the proprietors of these for allowing me to reproduce such pieces as have appeared in their respective newspapers.

"BATCHER."

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ROSALIE

Oh Muses lightly strike the chords, while I
Sing of a gentle maiden, whose sad fate
Made e'en the angels in the starry spheres
Weep, and all Nature sad, disconsolate ;
For oft her memory stirs my heart to tenderness,
And from the eye spontaneous gush the scalding
tears ;
For this sweet bud snatched thro' the Gates of
Death ;
This blue-orbed vision of the bygone years ;
E'en thou sweet Rosalie, Queen beyond all earthly
peers.

Lo, two fond parents were there, whose sad hearts
Sighed o'er their wedded past, for no fair child
Had come thro' portals of Love's Sanctuary,
And struggling poor their hard lot reconciled ;
Their oft-repeated prayers appeared in vain,
For ever childless seemed their fate to be ;
Alone they hastened o'er life's stormy main,
To the sad sombre shades of dark eternity ;
'Till ushered thro' the gloom came blessed Rosalie.

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

And in the gushings of their grateful hearts,
Full many a time they thanked their God again ;
For boon vouchsafed in answer to their prayers,
After long years of hopefulness and pain ;
Their humble cot became their Sanctuary,
They wove around them many sylvan bowers ;
Their land tho' circumscribed an Eden seemed,
Thought lightened toil, quick passed mellifluous
hours ;
For cradled in their shrine the fairest of all
earthly flowers.

Like rosebud slow expanding to the sun,
She daily grew more beauteous to the sight ;
The grateful parents bore her to the church,
In spotless vestments of the purest white ;
A prop to be in their declining years,
To bring to age a blissful life's repose ;
A comfort thro' the stormy path of life,
To dull the sharp edge of all future woes ;
They named her Rosalie, their small but bloomful
rose.

And soon her cheeks in early morning's prime,
Flashed back the ruby flushings of the morn ;
Her eyes like jewels from a casket shone,
Their humble cot her presence did adorn ;
No more they breathed on air the pent-up sigh,
At thought of her their saddest trial fled ;
Their hopes shot upwards to empyreal sky,
To them enchanted seemed their humble shed :
Ah happiest home, where heart to heart was wed.

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

And now in patter of her fairy feet,
And lisping words they did fresh beauties see ;
Like Heaven-sent messenger her radiant form,
Lit as a lamp their dull rusticity ;
And from her head the sweetly-clustering curls
Caressed the brow, and sought the dimpled
cheek ;
Her laugh more sweet than ripples in the dell,
What time the waters in the sun play hide and
seek ;
Most loving she became, and with sweet temper
meek.

But who can paint the parents' joy and pride,
As round their humble home she used to play ;
Ere yet she sought the balm of childish sleep,
And as she knelt beside them just a while to pray :
Her peaceful dreamland free from scenes of care,
What time her eyelids closed in slumber fast ;
They kissed the tress-veiled whiteness of her brow,
Then their bed sought with no misgivings vast ;
Nor any sombre clouds their future overcast.

Thus slow she grew and at the village school
With sunbright face a balm around her threw ;
A holy calmness as by rain-washed skies,
Or morning grass bedecked with pearls of dew ;
Beloved by all—her teacher and her mates,
Her smiling life as joyous as the sun ;
No angry word did e'er escape her lips,
And every heart of worth by her was won ;
While foremost in her lessons she, and foremost
in their fun.

Yet often in the midst of childish play
 A weariness o'erclouded her sweet face ;
 And oft she'd rest apart, while those around
 Traces of pain and anguish well might trace ;
 Oblivious to beckonings of her mates,
 She soared in other worlds to them unknown ;
 While scarlet flushings from that angel face,
 Lit up the colour of the sunkissed brown ;
 She seemed like some strayed angel from high
 Heaven flown.

In spite of weakness of her earthly frame,
 Her mind drank in great store of worldly lore ;
 And tho' eclipsed, her mates no envy felt,
 They could not help her fragile form adore ;
 Most by her teacher fondly was she loved,
 Her beauty like a glamour wrapt him round ;
 She stood perfection's ideal to the school
 Of all the virtues, round his heart she bound
 A thread of love, never to be unwound.

'T is interest gives an added zest to work
 In all things, so in the teacher's part ;
 And for the love he bore to Rosalie,
 He lavished all his store of learning's art ;
 She soon attained in school the topmost class,
 And by herself she studied day by day ;
 More zealous she became, and what she learned
 Remained in her retentive mind for aye ;
 And mighty grew the mind, 'midst body's slow
 decay.

Thus 'twixt her teacher and fair Rosalie,
Affection quickly deepened into love ;
No earthly love, but such as angels feel,
 In those bright realms, this mundane sphere
 above ;
She loved her teacher with a youthful love,
 His love returned was free from grosser thought ;
She prompted by his love to heights sublime,
 He but to guide his bright star as he ought ;
 For fairest, brightest she of all the pupils he
 had taught.

But Oh for ignorance in this nether world,
 By parents' fond indulgence to their child ;
Undue forbearance to their fragile bud,
 They all her childish whims in full beguiled ;
Ofttimes far in the night they let her stay ;
 When her soul should be locked in needful sleep ;
Till all outworn she weakly sought her couch,
 While stronger forms were locked in slumber
 deep ;
 Such practices in future days must make the
 parents weep.

No thought of staying ever from her school,
 Had she—while strength enabled her to go ;
As for her work she loved it as her soul,
 All-heedless of the lurking of her foe ;
The constant cough that rubified her face,
 Was all neglected, until passing late ;

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

It daily sapped the strength from her frail form,
Alas for her and him that such a fate,
As blighted love, should them at last await.

And still alas for all in this dull world,
Good comes, and goes with hurried feet more fast ;
Alas that summer skies and rainbow hues,
And silver-lined clouds should never last ;
Alas that our poor outlook on this world,
Should always presage sadness, longing, pain ;
That days of generous warmth so scant and few,
But herald blighting frosts and stinging rain ;
Saddening those past dear days, that never
come again.

No signs of future ill was seen by Rosalie,
Each day to her fresh blessings did unfold ;
Such halcyon days to her should always be,
Her love's warm stream would never e'er run
cold ;
As for her teacher of maturer years,
Such was the excessive rapture of his fire,
All things were pleasant that his vision saw,
No marks saw he that presaged love's sweet
pyre ;
Oh happy days for both, all in their loves entire.

Together they explored those realms of gold,
Elysian fields in lands of poesy ;
Together garnered wisdom from those minds,
To which all in these days show constancy ;

Together spoke of sundered loves of old,
 Too soon to be repeated by their own ;
 Together dearer to each other grew,
 Alas that seeds of love so deeply sown,
 Should wither in the bud, before the rose was
 blown.

Alas for throes that wrung her teacher's heart,
 O'er weighted burden he could ne'er control ;
 Oh better had he never loved this gem,
 Alas for words to speak his inmost soul ;
 His words too often died upon his lips,
 When he to her would all his love declare ;
 What right had he tho' pierced by the sting
 of love, to lay to her his sad heart bare ;
 Oft duty held him fast, and stern Convention
 cried " Beware."

" Oh Rosalie," he said to her at last,
 " My love for thee e'en now I must thee tell ;
 For thee my heart is withering at the root,
 More pangs I feel than those in depths of hell ;
 I love thee past all other things on earth,
 To thee my thoughts for evermore doth trend ;
 There's not a sight at which I daily look,
 But thy sweet image to itself doth lend ;
 I of thy heart love's votary to the end."

She raised her beauteous lids and sought his eyes,
 Her own all vermeil, and suffused with tears ;
 And gently placed her hand upon his arm,
 (Ah scene remembered in the future years) ;

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

'T was long she gazed, and o'er his anxious heart,
A fearful fluttering, feeling all undone ;
Like wretch who felt his doom for ever sealed,
Half-wishing he his suit had ne'er begun ;
As slow the laggard moments dragged by, one
by one.

At last her words came in their silvery tones,
" No words of mine may tell my love to thee ;
Oft have I read the love-light in thine eyes ;
Reflecting but thy soul's sweet jubilee ;
I love thee for the promptings of thy heart,
That sought my good, more than I can express ;
And when from thee I feel an aching void,
That fills my being all with bitterness ;"
Then in a chaste embrace they did each other
press.

Ne'er cloyed enchantment in those love-lit days,
Their golden world of love's sweet phantasy ;
When teeming kisses thrilled their pulsing hearts,
Nor wanted more their simple Arcady ;
Those sunbright days made richer by their love,
Those moonlit eves more silvery seemed to shine ;
Slow-dragging hours, when absence but endeared
Them more to each, causing the heart to pine
For endless day, in their deep depths their
secrets to enshrine.

But quickly passed those too too happy days,
When their young hearts felt joyous to the core ;
In sweet embraces and soft whisperings,
When kisses ceased 'twas but to herald more ;

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

Her soft caresses brought him ecstasy of soul,
His fond endearments caused her heart to
o'erbeat ;

Her frailer frame could not thus brook his love,
Which left her weakly, all suffused with heat ;
Too much for her the strain, tho' still to time
but meet.

Thus soon a climax reached in their love's dream,
He had poured forth his soul to her again ;
He held her tightly in his love-locked arms,
But o'er her beauteous face was seen the signs
of pain ;

"What ails thee loved one ?" said he in distress,
"Love should to love in sweet exchange be
given ;

Am I not still to thee thine all in all ?

What means this slighted love, is our bond
riven ?

I love thee as my soul, in thee my earth is
Heaven."

Then fast those placid eyes teemed o'er with tears.

She answering said : "Oh love my senses swim—
And when I feel I would caress the most,

My strength fast fails, my inward light grows
dim ;

But still for thee my love can never change,

Until this heart no more it's beatings give ;

'Till then each throb is evermore for thee,

My soul is linked with thine, for thee I live ;

Oh for my weakness, pardon and forgive."

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

Like flash of light across his senses came
The true reality of her life, his own
He marked so robust, as for her's
For ever weaker it had surely grown.
" Ah Love," he said, " Mine is a sere caress,
That slowly frets your young life day by day,
Henceforth my love assumes more gentle form,
Such ecstasy but causes thee dismay ;
And frights thy gentle soul from out it's
earthly clay."

And from that day his love became more chaste,
And soothing as the sweetness of the morn ;
And oft he nursed her gently in his arms,
While love-light shone in her blue orbs newborn ;
But oft he wiped the damp from her fair brow,
And sadly marked the vermeil of her cheek
Flushing more hectic, while she strove for breath,
And then subdued his wished-for power to speak ;
Blighted his ardour, made him childish-weak.

Ah Hope, the brightest angel of our dreams,
When fast thou sinkest in the human frame ;
Then what is life, when blighted by the blast
Of frigid hope ? What is love's sweet flame ?
He saw revealed the death-mark of their love,
Alas for their sweet union's short lived hour,
No hopeful spark he marked to light the gloom,
He saw the spectre Death her countenance
deflour—
Her life could not be saved by any earthly power.

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

His face became far paler than it's wont,
Ah killing love that blighteth what it kisses ;
Heart sickening tremors of the shades of death,
That change to wretchedness our earthly blisses ;
Unhappy days, for fast that constant cough,
Shattered her frame e'en to its inmost zone ;
And sad the days of never-ending watchfulness,
When he beside her bed stood, hopeless grown ;
For that sad hour to come, when her sweet spirit
should be flown.

And nearer drew the all too-peaceful end,
Her lover at her bedside to the last ;
Calm resignation followed dread despair,
He knew her tender life was ebbing fast ;
Still paler grew the light in her blue eyes,
Yet oft she whispered with such tender sound ;
And sadly bade them each and all adieu,
And gazed anew at each, and all around ;
Oh God that such sweet form should soon be
shrouded in the ground.

Said she : " My love, my time on earth is spent,
And yet for thee I'm nathless loth to go ;
The angels beckon oft to Rosalie,
I feel my life from this earth softly flow ;
Sweet music floods my being with its sound,
Which oft I heard in those past days of joy ;
I see the visitants of that golden world,
Stand ever waiting, for my soul's convoy
To those bright realms of bliss without alloy."

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

“ For me, my love, shed no more bitter tears,
For me, my parents, grieve not life away ;
For I can see afar in distant realms,
The brightness of ethereal, god-like day ;
Parted, but not for long, for you I'll wait,
The first to greet you on that shining shore ;
Where thro' the days of all eternity,
Our souls shall ne'er be parted—nevermore.
Weep not for Rosalie, she is but gone before.”

Her lover felt her hand grow cold as stone,
Her eyes waxed glassy in the gloomy night ;
The deathly stillness parted by their sobs,
They could not snatch their eyes from her pale
sight ;
They bore her slowly to her rustic grave,
With hearts far chillier than the icy mould ;
There was she laid to rest, and o'er her tomb,
A sculptured angel doth its wings unfold,
O'er what of earth remains of that young
heart of gold.

Not many years from his sweet angel's death,
Her lover pined away, his earthly star
For ever set in her, his only love,
He did not long contend in life's sad war ;
Sadly they laid him with her side by side,
With kindly hearts in bitterness around ;
Weeping to think that in this world of care,
The ending of true love should so be found ;
And these words on their tomb, now to their
loves redound :—

“ Here lie two lovers blighted in their bloom,
 No love was ever found on earth, so sweet,
 sublime ;
No, never since the dawning of the world,
 When God’s pulsations beat in heart of time ;
They loved each other with a lasting love,
 Joined are they now above the ambient air ;
Where all is peace and never-ending joy,
 Where all unknown are ought of worldly care ;
God grant we so may live that we may meet
 them there.”

MEN O’ TH’ FLYIN’ SHALE.

I’ve fought th’ flames on the western plains,
 When th’ smoke rolls dark and dense ;
I’ve ridden astride a brumby mare,
 As she cleared a barbed wire fence ;
I’ve shovelled coals in th’ blazin’ box,
 From plate of the rushin’ mail ;
These pale at sight of th’ naked light,
 O’ men o’ the flyin’ shale.

From the dark pit’s mouth at break o’ day,
 To th’ face with ceaseless tramp ;
Up th’ tunnel long they wend their way,
 By flare of a sickly lamp ;

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

Behind th' barks with steadfast eye,
They cut the shale in the bords,
Till their clothes are wet with clammy sweat,
And their muscles bulge like cords.

Till arms grow limp, and the eyes wax dim,
And brain's a-burst with the strain ;
And glassy shale by th' mountain's weight
Splinters th' barks amain ;
Cuts deep thro' veins and th' tender flesh
Ere they mark th' blood-stained sod ;
They raise their hands to a bleeding head,
And mutter their thanks to God.

Th' brave little pony and wheeler there,
Await 'mid the deafening roar ;
To leave the face for the light of day,
While they grasp the pick once more ;
The crusher rumbles, retorts are fed,
The fume-flakes burst on high ;
The mighty stack belches clouds of smoke
Above in an azure sky.

Good-bye ye men o' th' flyin' shale ;
Good-bye great hearts of gold ;
Toilin' in cavernous depths of earth
Till fires o' life grow cold ;
Till laid to rest in th' mountain's crest,
That's been your home so long,
What matter ! death comes to all at last ;
What matter if life's been strong.

A NIGHT ON A SHALE ASH-TIP.

WHEN departin' sunbeams flicker,
An' th' day shift hurries quicker,
Hurries home to seek a rest and needful respite
after toil;
Then we get th' splint together,
Trim th' fires nor heed the weather,
Nor retorts with fiery heat a-turnin' brittle shale to
oil.

All our day-dreams come an' languish,
All our mirth turns into anguish,
As we bring the good old night horse, fresh an'
willin' from the stall;
As the skip o' red-hot ashes
Wheel we up to light which flashes,
An' th' mountains hover o'er us gloomy like a
fun'ral pall.

Then with many a furious bangin',
Rattlin' chains an' irons a-clangin',
Down the tip, amid a cloud o' chokin' dust and
blindin' smoke,
Ashes roll like stony lava,
From volcanic peaks o' Java,
Rush we back for skips a-waitin', while the door-
men sing and joke.

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

All our blood with work's a-boilin',
As the shiftman does the oilin',
 As the firemen deftly scatter coals along the
 burnin' bars ;
Still the stars above us shinin',
Heaven's dark dome are faintly linin',
 Or the Queen o' Night's soft radiance dulls the
 light of all the stars.

Cribtime's past an' smoko's finished,
Nor our graft or strength's diminished.
 Tho' its everlastin' up an' up an' empty skips
 again ;
Tho' the frost maybe's adornin'
All the earth towards the mornin',
 Or the bitin' blast from up the gully's bringin'
 freezin' rain.

Day has come, an' lights 're dimmin',
Arms 're tired an' brains 're swimmin',
 Sulphur stars beneath the ash-tip fade again
 with mornin's light ;
Home we go to sleep, but never—
Tho' we try in dreams—t' sever
 Rattlin' skips an' thumpin' engine, gratin'
 voices of the night.

LIGHTS OF THE TIP.

FROM of old they sang the glory
Of the scintillating stars—
Those constant twinklers, ever gleaming pale ;
Come across the land with me,
Leave your starry galaxy,
Come in the ranges where they're roasting shale;
Where your glorious starlight paleth
In the lights which gem the night,
Sulphur fumes and ashes shining
'Neath an amethystine light,
And the tip all darkly seemeth
In a thousand jewels dight.

Hear the grumbling of the crusher
As it grinds the brittle shale,
The rhythmic tinkle of the warning bell,
While another load goes down,
All the thump of engines drown,
See the radiant lights a-glowing—
Each one like night's sentinel ;
Shining on in all their grandeur,
Weirdly frown the cliffs around,
Twinkling still in shining radiance
From the tip-brow to the ground,
While a stream of fiery ashes
Poureth down with scarce a sound.

Ask yourself the meaning of it—
All coruscant in its glow—
'Tis but nature by science aptly dressed.

Mark what evolution's done,
Subtle products sought and won ;
By patient trying labor's doubly blest ;
Nature's beauties find a rival
In the wonders science wrought,
Still progressing through the aeons,
By man's strivings dearly bought,
Foretaste but of greater marvels
Crowning wealth from nature brought.

THE MAN THAT'S HOLING COAL.

When you're smoking peacefully away on a cold,
frosty night,
And coal's warmth and comfort fill your spirit with
delight,
Just take your thoughts with me awhile to the
miner at the face,
Aye, think of the man a-holing coal.
Thump, thump away he's belting there with all
his might and main,
Till a crackling and a grumbling tell his work is
not in vain,
But you, you'd think the universe was coming
down again,
So a cheer for the miner in his hole.

His face is black and grimy with black diamonds'
dirty dust,
And the stink from off his pit-lamp engenders your
disgust,
But there's much more grease and coal-dust in his
throat ;
And he's every inch a man.
Although he's cramped and sitting in about three
feet of space,
And thump, and thump, and thump again, his pick
it goes apace ;
But there's little fascination for you in such a place.
So a kind word for the miner when you can.

It's quite the odds he's working in about a foot of
wet,
And the drops are trickling down his face, yes,
clammy drops of sweat,
And from his body mists arise, and all around is
dank,
Oh, it's hard to be a-working in his bord.
Maybe he's got to belt it out, there's not a sign of
crack,
And the way his body's cooped up, you'd think
'twould break his back,
And you : five minutes of it would set you all
a-wrack,
You'd think your back was pierced by a sword.

Yes, you've had a little of his toil when all is going
well,

Of floods, explosions, falling roofs, there's much
more I could tell,

And one of these on any day may bode a life's
farewell ;

Oh, he's made of the very sternest stuff.

Yet, mark him when his shift is done, all in the
light of day,

Yes, watch him as I've watched him, ye who go
your easy way,

Face spotted—blue, and deathly pale, his health
has had to pay,

And his lot, to say the least of it, is rough.

BATCHIN'.

Up before th' break o' day, scrapin' up th' chips,

Axe that blunt it makes a fellow sigh ;

Water fetch'd a mile away wasted by th' goats,

Wish th' brutes 'd double up an' die.

Bag o' spuds bought yesterday nibbled by a cow,

Neighbour's cat has chawed up all th' meat ;

Jim, me mate, a-nailin' bags, spilled th' blanky
tacks,

Gives a fellow rats about th' feet.

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

Billy's on th' fire at last, ev'rything is gay,
Jim's a-bangin' boots about th' floor ;
Deftly misses fowls an' pig, over billy goes,
Tries a fellow's temper more an' more.

Hopes o' tea an' tucker gone, rushin' off t' graft,
Poor old stomach's rumblin' like a drum ;
Shov'lin' coals along th' bars, feelin' fit t' faint,
Boss'll see we make the engines hum.

Home again when shift is done, other work t' do,
Same old luck when gettin' ready tea ;
Butcher's left th' leg o' beef near th' window-sill,
Jones's dog's anticipated me.

Huntin' for a needle now t' mend a shirt that's torn,
Sewin' patch o'er patch on Jim's old pants ;
Not a jolly minute left even for a smoke,
Now begins a battle with the ants.

Tumblin' into bed at last, now th' bloomin' fleas
Give a man no respite in his bed ;
Sleep is but a nightmare, and above I plainly see
Jim a-drivin' wedges in my head.

THE BRICKY.

WHEN the pug is on the table, and the sand is hot
and dry,

And you're feeling fit and willing, for pay day's
drawing nigh ;

Oh, it's merry is the bricky's life, although the
graft is hard,

But the pug is nicely tempered, and nought the
kilns retard.

In the cutter or the strike, there's nought but what
you like ;

In the mould or in the frog there's nought that
seems to clog ;

Oh, it's merry, merry is the bricky's life.

Oh, it's merry is the bricky's life in heat of sum-
mer's day,

When your job is nicely sheltered, and there's heap'
of pug and clay ;

And when the day's work's finished, there's a
thousand made, or more,

And things are reminiscent of pleasant days of yore ;

Talks of politics begin, as you slap the wet pug in,

Or you're quietly grafting there, building castles in
the air ;

Then it's merry, merry is the bricky's life.

Oh, it's merry is the bricky's life in cold of winter's
morn,

When the ground is thickly frosted, and you're
wretched and forlorn ;

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

What with feet and legs near frozen, and with
brain a-feelin' clogged,
You wonder if on yesternight you wasn't water-
logged ;
Like a new hand at the game, clay and pug's alike
to blame ;
And you've lost your sleight of hand—sure you'll
get a reprimand—
Then it's merry, merry is the bricky's life.

Oh, it's merry is the bricky's life when strength is
pet'ring out,
And you're racked with rheumatism, the pain it
makes you shout ;
And you're sadly looking backward to the cash
you didn't save,
For one foot stems life's ocean, and the other's in
the grave ;
Then you foot it o'er the land, oh, the prospect
isn't grand ;
Trudging on from morn till night, when there's
not a job in sight—
Is it merry, merry then the bricky's life ?

FLORA.

SHE cometh with laughter,
Apollo's fair daughter ;
Light Zephyr comes after,
On butterfly's wing :

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

Her kingdom with flowers,
Unsparingly showers ;
Earth's garden embowers,
Hail, Queen of the Spring !

The shy violet peeping,
Her head in dew steeping ;
And modestly keeping,
Her sisters below ;
The red, the white roses,
Each petal uncloses ;
And proudly each poses,
Her beauty to show.

The pink and carnation,
Each taking her station ;
In joy and elation,
Besparkled with dew ;
The wattles are blooming,
The bushland perfuming ;
The tulip assuming,
Her daintiest hue.

The sweet birds are calling,
The fountains are falling,
The gods are installing,
Fair Flora on high ;
And flowers of Australia,
For festal Floralia,
Have donned their Regalia ;
Their goddess draws nigh !

THE BUSH SCHOOL.

WHEN hastening down the busy city's street,
For sake of sustenance I take my way ;
All heedless of the pallid crowds I meet,
Whose souls seem crushed by worries of the day ;
My fancy ofttimes makes a transient flight,
I see a playground, with its school-house small—
Rough-built by settlers on a cleared site—
With mantling ivy on its low bark wall ;
'Twas there in other days I played with joy,
Midst happy lads, and wished recess more long ;
With all the youthful ardour of a boy,
What time the bush bird tuned its sweetest song ;
Self-consciousness returns with twinge of pain,
But ah ! those days will never come again !

THE TROUBADOUR.

In the dark, mystic, medieval days,
When deeds of noble chivalry were done ;
The troubadour 'fore King and patriot lord,
Majestic sang of former glories won.

Of feats of strength, surpassing all belief,
That graced the nation's son—the future knight ;
Who strong in brain, in prowess and in limb,
From boyhood well prepared himself to fight.

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

How in due time he girded on his sword,
How bared his neck for mystic accolade ;
And how his skill in horsemanship he proved,
And learned to wield aloft the trusty blade.

And how with sterner rites the knight was made,
His arms adorned the Altar of the Church ;
How watching in the holy fane he prayed,
And vowed his country's name he'd ne'er be-
smirch.

And thus completed knight he hastened forth,
And in fair eyes he marked his guiding stars ;
And sans reproach—brave, generous, kind and
true,
Sought future glory in the coming wars.

Perchance a gallant hero of his land,
He led her armies to redress her wrong,
And with his life's blood earned an endless name,
Renowned he died in fight against the strong.

L'ENVOI.

God—in these dire, indifferent, thoughtless days—
Send troubadours to sing the path to fame ;
When stranger-greed moves slow to Austral's
shores,
Raise knights to hold supreme the British name.

FROM THE VALLEY.

BEFORE me up the mountain,
The waving tree tops rise ;
With sparkling silvered edges,
They kiss the azure skies.

Wild apple trees, light-tinted,
In varied shades a-sheen ;
While iron-bark and white-gum
Are clothed in sabler green.

And far to right of tree tops
The stark bare rocks appear ;
Erect like frowning turrets
Of castles in the rear.

My fancy quickly peoples
Their many-fissured sides ;
See the sprightly wallaby,
As crouched in cave he hides.

The evening breeze blows cooler,
The wee-tits sweetly sing ;
From tree to tree right nimbly
They flit, and music bring.

The new-shorn sheep are passing
To favoured pastures sweet ;
They pause for thirsty lambkins,
Then pass close by my feet.

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

The shadows slowly lengthen,
The birds have gone to rest ;
And far beyond yon rampart
The gold fades in the west.

And now the weary landscape
Is wrapt in sombre hue ;
The pale moon slowly brightens
In skies of lighter blue.

And brighter and still brighter,
The Queen of Night's soft light
Looks down on sleeping Nature,
And limns the placid night.

RUSSET AND GOLD.

WHEN the sun in his splendor sinks low in the west,
And leaves but the russet and gold,
The shadows fast lengthen, while even's mists
strengthen,
Night's mantle begins to unfold ;
Then my heart sinks within me, while sadder
thoughts win me,
At departure of russet and gold ;
Ah, I sigh for the splendor, which these scenes
engender—
Long to call back the russet and gold.

And cold grows the even, and scattered, uneven
The russet of west ; but the gold—
Its beams slowly linger, and stand but harbinger
Of darkness and night and the cold,
But lovers are glad, while my heart is sad,
And their arms round each other they fold ;
To scold them is needless, they spoon there all
heedless,
And their story's been many times told.

Take my thoughts back to other days, back to the
parting ways,
Ye lovers out there in the cold ;
And I think of a maiden, with golden hair laden,
A picture in russet and gold.
The pink of her cheek the golden curls seek,
And a scene of my life doth unfold ;
But the thought, bitter-sweet, is the heart's
winding sheet,
For gone is my russet and gold.

THE WAGTAIL.

THEY liquid notes float on the air,
Clear and distinct in tones so pure ;
They seem to say, with trill so rare—
“ Pretty creature.”

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

Thy frail-built nest all eyes must lure,
And stride thee with a load of care ;
One little knows what you endure.
Trill on, sweet bird of plumage fair,
For sweet thy song, tho' fate obscure ;
Be with thy mate a happy pair,
Pretty creature.

CHOPPIN'.

CHOPPIN' in th' dawn at early mornin',
Choppin' while th' dew is on th' grass ;
Choppin' in th' day-time t' keep th' pots a-boilin',
Choppin' after sunset when th' day begins t' pass.

Day by day it's just th' same, nothin' but a-
choppin',
Grindin' axe in moments spare t' start th' game
again ;
Choppin' logs and feet and toes, with both my hands
a-blister,
'S if I'm keepin' furnaces aglow for Tubal Cain.

When I seat myself at night, still I hear the
choppin',
Stiflin' ev'ry other sound, and throbbin' in my
brain;
Till th' boss looks in and glares—a sign th' heap's
a-vanishin',
And I rush from out th' house to ply the axe
a-main.

In my dreams at midnight all the world's a-
choppin'
Choppin' stumps and people down, choppin'
iron bars ;
Choppin' ev'ry bloomin' thing, from snakes to
wooden houses,
And the axemen up above are choppin' down th'
stars.

THE RANGE AT RUNNING STREAM.

Out in the heart of the ranges,
Where mountains kiss the sky ;
Where fox and dingo wait their prey,
And wild hawk flashes by ;
Where bushmen's axe have hewn the trees,
The sloping mounds arise,
To face the targets, milky white,
Centred with black bull's eyes.

This is the spot where marksmen come
To fire till the setting sun ;
Sequestered place, you'd scarcely think
It knew report of gun ;
This is the spot where rifle's crack
Wakes the sleeping life around ;
Where deadly bullet cuts the air,
But seldom rips the ground.

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

The marksmen there, but what of them,
Alert, but quiet they seem ;
They lie full stretched upon the ground
And wait with eyes that gleam ;
They wait the sign to fire away,
For flag to show the mark,
Then ride for home at fall of night,
Many a mile in the dark.

These are the men of quiet mien
That heed at their country's call ;
Who'll leave their kith and kin behind
To conquer or nobly fall ;
There's little glamor in their life,
But they love the rifle's crack,
And foes will have to deal with them
When placed at our country's back.

THE BLAST FURNACE.

IN this land of ours there's mineral wealth,
Aye, stores of iron and coal ;
Side by side, in the depths of earth,
Waiting for man's control ;
Waiting to fashion the useful things
Made from iron and steel ;
But these are shipped from other lands,
Against our nation's weal.

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

For here we need machinery—
Cylinders, pipes and posts ;
Household goods in hardware, too,
Are needed within our coasts ;
Ploughs and harrows, spades and hoes,
Cutlery, guns ,and wire ;
Railways, ships—are needful all—
To make a great empire.

And down in the town of Lithgow,
A baby furnace stands ;
Fighting a strenuous battle for life,
Guided by master hands ;
Fighting for leave to forge the iron,
Only its own birthright ;
You may see its light as a sunlit glow,
In the depths of a starless night.

And day by day the saffron ore
Is hoisted up on high ;
Day by day from the mighty stack,
The smoke rolls to the sky ;
Day by day, the furnace tapped—
The molten iron streams forth ;
The pigs are fashioned and piled on high,
And we know what their work is worth.

For well have we Australians
Helped this baby in its need ;
And patriots true give bounty due,
For its fight 'gainst foreign greed ;

And the day will come when we'll be paid
For good seed we have sown ;
'Twill stand to us in coming years,
When the industry holds its own.

What brought the wealth to Britain's shores ?
What made the nation great ?
But the mighty workers in iron and steel—
They moulded the nation's fate ;
Study her history in the past,
'Twill surely make you feel
'Twas her wondrous stores from mother earth—
Her coal and iron and steel.

'Tis not alone the soldier bold,
Who fights his country's wars,
Who faces death in other lands,
With his guns and his petars ;
Nor yet, indeed, the statesman,
To his country's interests true ;
Nor yet the man who wields the pen,
That's doing it all for you.

But those in the ranks of industry,
Working to keep your lives ;
Fashioning things of usefulness,
For country, home, and wives ;
Fighting away 'gainst foreign greed,
In this, our country's mart ;
Helping Australia all they can,
Playing a noble part.

So let us speak with a definite aim,
With no uncertain sound ;
Help these men who fashion and do,
Let our influence spread around ;
Let the orator's voice and journalist's pen,
Work with us hand in hand—
Till a myriad furnaces glow with fire,
In this our Southern land.

THE ROOSTER.

AWAY up in the Pig Run there lived an aimless man,
Who shuffled thro' this pilgrimage, they called
him weary Dan ;
Well known to all the country-side as a rampant
charlatan,
But posterity will know him thro' the Rooster.

Now, my readers may imagine a fowl with splendid
legs,
All wings and spurs and feathers when erect on his
two pegs ;
Who shepherded his hens about until they had laid
their eggs,
But this fancied picture's nothing like the
Rooster.

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

So please to hear my story, up in the wild Pig Run,
Where Daniel trapped the 'possum or shot 'em
with a gun ;
The people came from far and near to see the sport
and fun
Afforded to the country by the Rooster.

By reading of the papers Dan got it in his head
That folk around were asses, for that was what he
said ;
The way they worked and bullocked, was enough
to kill 'em dead,
Oh, if they only knew about the Rooster !

And here, to cut the story short, the papers gave it
out,
A new machine was patented, without a grain of
doubt
'T would chase the old machines away, disgraceful
in their rout,
This marvellous, unprecedented Rooster.

Dan kept the matter to himself, the price was
twenty pounds ;
He sold his pigs and poddies, and crops upon the
ground ;
Then let the cat from out the bag, by telling folk
around,
He'd a notion in his head—it was the Rooster.

At last he donned his Sunday suit, and took away
the cash,
Assured himself that he was cute, and ne'er did
business rash ;
He took his quarters in the town, and oh, he cut a
dash,
Expecting to redeem it by the Rooster.

Besides his saddle horse he took a pair of draughts
as well,
And bravely planked his money down nor thought
the thing a sell ;
He drew it forth from out it's shed, and down the
road, pell-mell,
It dashed all in it's crimson paint—a Rooster.

Here, I forget to tell you, but in a trice it's told,
He'd twenty five per cent. to draw on any more he
sold ;
He fancied that he'd soon be sunk in yellow
glittering gold,
By commissions he received on the Rooster.

Dan drove up to the Pig Run as serious as a saint,
And twenty people went stone blind thro' staring
at the paint,
And fifty more of the crowd around went right off
in a faint ;
When the dusty road was gemmed by the
Rooster.

Now, Scroggins filled an empty dish from out the
old stock tank,
And planked himself upon a post ; oh, how that
water stank ;
The people tumbled off the fence, the smell it was
so rank,
For Scroggins' part was christening the Rooster.

The lads let down the slip-rails, and wonder blurred
their eyes,
The like they'd never seen before, so great was
their surprise ;
'T was greater far when Scroggins threw the water
in the skies,
And loudly said : " I name the thing the
Rooster."

But Dan received it on his head, and down his
beard it poured,
While Scroggins hid behind the crowd, oh, how
poor Daniel roared ;
You'd think wild cattle had him down, and by the
bull was gored,
But the people cried aloud, " Hurrah, the
Rooster."

But soon he told the people he was agent for the
show,
He'd give a trial of the thing, 't was a little use to
blow ;

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

First come, first served, his motto was, he plainly
told them so,
So the next thing was a trial of the Rooster.

And on a day appointed he got the bird to work,
And told the crowd assembled it had been never
known to shirk ;
'T would plough and sow at once, he said, without
the slightest jerk,
This marvellous contrivance called the Rooster.

Dan showed the spikes and levers, and how they
did the job,
All brassy in the noonday sun—but Scroggins told
the mob—
“ The whole concern's a fraud,” says he, “ or I'm
gone in the nob,
This shining fangled fakus named the Rooster.”

Now very gently at the first the Rooster made a
start,
The spikes they pulverised the ground, the seeds
dropped like a dart ;
Till the teeth empierced a hidden stump and then
refused to part,
And things looked only middling for the Rooster.

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

But Dan began to tear his hair, his luck he did
deplore,
And lashed his leaders o'er and o'er, the spikes
stuck fast the more ;
The horses smashed the spikes at last, and down
the field they tore,
The saints preserve the safety of the Rooster.

Adown the field the horses tore, and dragged the
thing behind,
And Dan was pitched into the dirt, with dust was
almost blind ;
The Rooster bumped against the stumps, the
horses didn't mind
They only wished to free them from the Rooster.

Still madder yet the Rooster dashed against the
stumps and trees,
The crowd behind fast followed, just like a swarm
of bees,
And gathered remains of wood and iron, and brass
along the leas,
'T was all that was remaining of the Rooster.

There at the Rooster's funeral stood a sympathetic
crowd,
And Dan I can assure you looked quite reverse
of proud ;
His Rooster gone, his money gone, his noble spirit
cowed,
The day his horses bolted with the Rooster.

BALLAD OF BLASTING.

“ DYNAMITE or gelignite, half a plug and clay up
tight,

Our's the job of shifting endless rock :

Waiting for the stone to fly, when it gives a
“ Boom,”

And the landscape trembles with the shock ;

Waiting for the new chum to show himself again :

He was simply hidden in a shaft ;

Plug it up again, lads, set the fuse aglow—

Blasting always sends a new chum daft :

Here, mate, call him back again,

'Fore he gives the folks around a shock ;

Dynamite, gelignite, dust-clouds in the air,

Blowing up the sandstone rock.”

“ Oh, it's hard, and don't forget it, drilling all the
day,

Your drill a-getting near as hot as fire ;

Your're pouring water in to ease the rock a bit,

The danger never 'lows your arm to tire ;

Tho' you sometimes may forget, those harmless
looking sticks

Are gelignite, not taffy sticks to chew—

And the detonators there won't stand a pricking
pin,

For they'd quickly blow your hand in two.”

ROSALIE AND OTHER VERSES.

“ Maybe your job’s a-shifting rock and earth to
make a tip,
And the sun’s a blazing ball of flame ;
But not a breath of air comes from off the moun-
tain’s top,
You’ve got to do the drilling just the same ;
The sweat is pouring off you, a never-ending stream,
And you’re banging fit to crack your brain ;
Forget not when you’re filling up, ’mid choking
dust and heat,
It’s dynamite or gelignite again.”

“ Or perchance you’re driving by a pit lamp’s
feeble flare
And thumping ’longside a gassy bord ;
You’ve got it charged and ready, you switch the
current on,
Half a dozen boom a thundrous chord ;
You hurry down the heading to shift the dirt and
stone,
Not thinking any danger’s in the way ;
A missed shot splits the darkness, not twenty feet
ahead,
And how you’re saved is more than you can say.

“ And so you keep on belting and charging up again,
Day after day you’re thumping just the same ;
And tho’ you know your cake is dough, unless
you’ve better luck,
You stay for fascination of the game ;

Still, you wouldn't mind it half so much, if others
played the man,

And your new hands showed a bit of pluck ;
But what's in life or thumping toil, without a spice
of risk—

Oh, it raises you a notch above the ruck.
So here, mate, charge 'em up again,

Let the mountains echo with the shock ;
Dynamite, gelignite, dust-clouds in the air,
Blowing up the sandstone rock."



POEMS OF
BEAUTIFUL BATHURST

Beautiful Bathurst

BEAUTIFUL BATHURST, thy praises resound
O'er the land of Australia, for ever around ;
Say—what charms are thine, that make thee so
 blest,
That draw us like magnets from east and from
 west ?
Oh, ask of thy sun-kissed skies of blue,
Of green plains, of mountains, which purples
 imbue ;
Of translucent streams, where the green willows
 lave,
What charms to this city the name Beautiful gave.

Beautiful Bathurst, sweet gem of the plains,
Thy enchantment in my heart for ever remains.
Say, what makes me seek thee as traveller a bourne,
That thrills through my bosom each time I return ?
Oh, ask of my walks through your green lanes and
 drives,
In life-laden ether, where sickness ne'er thrives ;
And ask of the fabrics symmetrically strewn,
Oft mantled with ivy, what beckons her own.

BEAUTIFUL BATHURST AND OTHER VERSES.

Beautiful Bathurst, the tourist's domain,
Who seek thee but once must seek thee again ;
All brimming with comfort, with pleasure and
rest,
Tho' I've wandered afar, no city's more blest ;
Still ask of thy children, all glowing with health,
What charms thou dost offer far better than
wealth ;
Oh, ask of the lovers that nest in thy park,
Where the flowers' luscious fragrance lends charms
to the dark ;
Yet ask of the aged—ere parting is nigh,
Of mellifluous climate, and beautiful sky.

Beautiful Bathurst, more beautiful still,
Beauties ever increasing by lowland and hill ;
I love thee in spring time, when flowers are in
bloom,
I love thee in summer, when shades whisper
" room " ;
I love thee in autumn, when leaves blanch and fall,
I love thee in winter, when frost is o'er all.
In comparing thy charms I must but allow,
Thou'rt brightest and best of all cities I know.

THE PINES OF LOGAN BRAE.

COME to where the stalwart pine trees,
Sing their woeful songs to me ;
Like aeolian harps of fancy,
Crooning mournful harmony.

When the sun slow-setting westward,
Steep the spires with auric light ;
Softly zephyrs playing through them,
Sadly sing into the night.

While the purple night creeps slowly,
And the bright stars twinkling shine ;
Loud the diapason swelling,
Petrifies this heart of mine.

Like the plumes of myriad hearses,
Rear thy trunks to arching sky ;
All suggestive to the watchers,
That man liveth but to die.

Lowly by with honied sweetness,
Flowers their odours shed around ;
Umbrose wall, ye screen their beauty,
All their sweetness doth imbound.

But I know that Nature teaches
Lessons true of death and life ;
Nought in her desmene I venture,
Of her truths is half so rife.

Doubtless to the hopeful pilgrim,
 Leaning forward to life's goal ;
Thy sad songs are ever welcome,
 Breathe serenity of soul.

Now I hear thy name is changed,
 Thou are called Saint Joseph's Mount ;
Stand a bulwark for God's Kingdom,
 May thy music help the Fount.

Thus I'll leave thee, sad and lonely
 Are thy memories to me ;
Leave thee while Eolus gravely
 Croons his mournful harmony

A MISTY SUNRISE FROM THE BALD HILLS.

I came out with the lark at break of day,
 And with a friend to the Bald Hills I hied ;
To watch the glorious sun pass on his way,
 And other beauties ere the dawning died.

And as our slow ascent at last began,
 We chatted of our healthfulness with glee ;
Athena's breath and sights Elysian,
 And rustic charms to view at liberty ;
When turning round to view the long expanse,

Of verdant plain—by mountain fringed—serene,
A picture smote the eye, and all a-trance,
None spake to other wrapt up in the scene—
A snow-white misty carpet had been laid,
From where we stood to the far distant
heights ;
Which darkly by the mists were all arrayed,
Ecstatic beauty dimming other sights ;
And long we looked with wonder-waiting eyes,
At sight we thought we'd ne'er again behold ;
At scene adorned by white and misty haze,
Before it fled at sight of morning's gold.
At last Aurora's shafts a-steep with fire
Rose o'er the distant rim, what charmed us so
Vanished in air, as if it feared the ire
Of Morning's King, and hastened fast to go ;
Entrancing, beautiful, without compeer I vow,
That scene I'll ne'er forget, it charms me now.

THE TRIUMPH OF MACHATTIE PARK.

QUEEN FLORA came down,
From her throne in the skies ;
By Zephyrus wafted,
Then backward she hies—
'Way back to her realms in the spheres :
Soon after in conclave,
The gods all did come ;

BEAUTIFUL BATHURST AND OTHER VERSES.

But Flora sat gloomy,
And sullen and glum ;
And her eyes were suffused with tears.

Was it sight of the sun,
That drew her tears down ?
Sweet pearlets of dew,
Each flower to crown ;
Or her stay from her children so long ?
Nay, 't was quarrels of mortals,
By incense inflamed ;
It rose from the jonquil,
Passion's emblem—oft named :
And their rancour was heated and strong.

To the gods she then told,
Her story of woe ;
The cause of the tumult,
The din and the row ;
Were the tourists who circle the earth ;
The bone of contention,
What park in the land,
For the rest was a model,
For charms the most grand ;
And their discord had strangled all mirth.

So the gods straight decided,
Fair Flora to send ;

With nymphs in attendance,
The discord to end ;
She came down on celestial dew :
Which glistened and sparkled,
With prismatic lights ;
'Neath arcade enwoven,
Of floral delights :
While the Muse chanted symphonies new.

She sat in the spring time,
The pride of the year ;
At feasts of Floralia,
All over our sphere ;
With corona the victor to mark.
Again to gods convened,
Said she, " One little gem,
In Beautiful Bathurst,
Gained our diadem ;
And Machattie's the name of that park !"

" For care of my children,
For sweet symmetry ;
For silver-wreathed fountains,
Lakelet, fernery ;
Artistic rotunda, and green leafy bowers :
She stands like a jewel ;
Of Bathurst the pride ;
By tourists her beauties,
Are famed far and wide :
So the garland's for her," says the Queen of
the flowers.

ALL SAINTS' COLLEGE.

OH, come sweet Muse, and from life's memories,
Surcharged with scenes, and with ecstasy of pain,
Teach me one reminiscence from the past to
cherish,

From those fast fading from the weary brain.
Lead me again thro' portals of that school,
To morning prayers—with masters standing by ;
Thence let me pass to that sequestered room,
To catch at Wisdom's words, as child to lullaby.

Listen enraptured, as with bright inspiration,
He weaves great store of learning from some
famous bard ;
As in those days, when interest lit the face,
And conquering mind with inattention warred.

Oh wondrous Shakespeare, greatest of all days,
And Milton, with thy weighty verse sublime ;
And Cowper, Nature's votary, speak with me
again,
Or Coleridge, Scott or Goldsmith claim the time.

Bright days of youth, in memory's hidden store,
Those golden hours are cherished by me still ;
Those gems of wisdom from the Muse's lips,
Oft when alone the slumbering senses thrill.

BEAUTIFUL BATHURST AND OTHER VERSES.

Thrice blessed day, when I to win the Muse,
Began with ardour, with my master's aid ;
Thrice blessed now—the Muse—I woo her still,
As he who woos a maid.
Oft times she calls me from a babbling world,
“ Come, come,” she says, “ to glories of the
spheres ;”
For gods still hold their intercourse with men,
Beyond the pale of earthly atmospheres.”
Seek in the pages of the mighty past,
Where glow all clear the entrance to my shrine ;
Solace thy soul with incense—breathing balm,
Then climb with me to star-lands all-divine.”

Thus do I scale with reverend trembling steps,
Parnassian steeps to bright Elysian strands ;
There sip sweet nectar from Ambrosial Founts,
And wisdom harvest in those splendent lands.

Shall I with base ingratitude o'er look the good,
Like faithless nine of old, who doubtless cleansed,
Scorning the source from whence they drew their
life,
And ne'er came back to Him who good dispensed.

Not so, O school, but with an homage due,
My thanks I pay, long may thy name increase ;
My listless song will never half requite,
The good vouch-safed, my praises never cease.

A HEALTHFUL MORNING EXCURSION.

THE cock's shrill clarion wakes the morn,

• A Bathurst morn—in russet clad—

And thro' the streets I take my way,

Adown the Vale Road I shall stray,

While cool Athene breathes on day,

And Nature whispers, "O be glad!"

Hushed is the city's life as yet,

The blinds are drawn, the windows fast

As now the railway bridge I span,

The morning breeze my face doth fan,

The skies are sweet cerulean ;

I reach the city's bounds at last,

For now my mind is all at ease,

May think what thoughts it will ;

Lo, I will sit at Nature's shrine,

And mark her beauties all divine ;

Perchance my sickness may decline,

And healthfulness give place to ill.

Oh, thou sweet briar that decks my way,

Thy petals are expanding wide ;

For Spring is coming on apace,

The young red stalks thy stems do grace—

Thy freshness gives my mind solace—

In this the sweet spring tide.

BEAUTIFUL BATHURST AND OTHER VERSES.

And now Apollo's Car to east,
Is clomb above the willow trees ;
His golden radiance gilds the land,
The feathered choir their notes expand—
As thro' discoursed a Naiad band—
Celestial sounding harmonies.

The Vale Creek now abuts my way,
In silvery windings-crystal clear—
And thro' the foliage on the banks
The rabbits play a thousand pranks ;
As if to God they send their thanks ;
And glad the dawning year.

And now must I rest in their shades,
As in the days gone by ;
When youthful maiden by me sat,
Beguiled the time with sprightly chat,
Oft times my heart went pit-a-pat,
And just as oft my soul did sigh.

We wandered thro' the willow trees,
Which canopied the lucid stream ;
And Oh, to tell ecstatic truth,
The kisses passed—and all in ruth—
Ah gods were kind to me in youth
And all my world was but a dream.

A nymph of rural paradise,
Her glossy tresses rippled down ;
Her eyes like twin stars ardent shone ;

BEAUTIFUL BATHURST AND OTHER VERSES.

Her cheeks were like an anemone ;
And lips that might a kiss condone,
But spell has gone, the vision flown.

For I can see a milkman's cart,
To Bathurst hurrying on its way ;
And on the stilly morning air,
A train's shrill whistle cries " beware !"
Quick dashing by with dazzling glare ;
As tho' impatient of delay.

And I e'en now must hasten back,
For sternest cry of duty calls ;
Life-giving strength thro' pulses strong ;
With all my being feeling strong,
My backward walk the joys prolong,
And Nature still my soul enthralls.

And here immersed in ruder scenes,
Those days flash back to me ;
And thro' the thumping engine's sound
And peace by harsher noises drowned,
Thro' murky atmosphere around,
Those scenes still breathe an ecstasy.

Oh, ye—whose kind fates grant to you
The healthful scenes 'neath Bathurst skies ;
Be thankful for your beauteous clime,
Salubrious air, and sights sublime,
Sweet-beaming most in morning's prime,
Ere vernal beauty flies.

SONNET TO BATHURST.

OH, Bathurst's brightest jewel of the plains,
Beneath thy skies my childhood's happy hours
Were spent. Of thee my praises gush in showers,
And while one vital spark of life remains,
My soul shall love what'er to thee pertains ;
I love thee for thy cumbent leafy bowers,
Plains, skies, hills, streams, and plentitude of
flowers ;
Celestial sweetness thee to me enchains ;
But best I love thee when from distant scene,
A transient sight, thy beauteous form appears
To ravished eyes, as ever—calm, serene,
As train fast rumbles o'er the watery piers,
Oh, soul's delight ! heart's ecstasies survene ;
And leave me joyful, smiling thro' my tears.

TO THE MACQUARIE RIVER.

AGAIN in dreams I view Macquarie's race,
And plunge right in with shouting and grimace ;
Oh, river, thou to me hast been unkind,
A kindred soul to death by thee destined ;
My kindest mate thou sucked within thy deep,
And calm within the cemetery his sleep ;
I viewed his clay as child, his touch like stone,
His features changed, not like the one I'd known ;

A mate he was as brave as e'er was seen,
Nipped in his youthful bloom, misfortune keen :
And then a nameless, dreadful fear came o'er,
Anon as passing thro' the open door ;
I hardly heeded those his kin who wept,
Their grief mine too, his image still is kept
Tight locked within recesses of the heart,
From memory's secret depths 't will never part;
His friendship well remembered to the end,
But, oh, how hard to lose a boyish friend !

THE TOILER IN EXILE.

I'VE met him oft on the Bathurst Mail,
Off to his job again ;
Away to sweat in the rounds of toil,
To battle it out amain ;
But his heart was light as the train flew on,
For he thought of those at home ;
What odds as long as they were right,
If he was forced to roam.

So follow him ye who stay at home,
Whose lot in the world is light ;
Aye follow him to his distant bourne,
Where he's dumped the battle to fight ;

As he leaves his train on a lonesome trudge,
O'er miles of bushland track ;
To his mountain hut, and rough hard toil,
That's his ere he trains it back.

Perhaps he sweats in a cavernous mine,
Cramped out of human form ;
Crouching in water ankle deep,
Knowing naught of sun or storm ;
Where the roof is bad, and the light is dim,
And the air is a blighted curse ;
But his life is safe while the props hold good,
And the fates are not averse.

Beltin' away the whole day long,
Holin' the stubborn coal ;
Gulping in breaths of poisonous fumes,
Like a slave in a dungeon hole ;
Drilling away in the hardest rock,
A gelignite charge to fire ;
Where a chance miss-shot may easily bring,
The end of his life's desire.

Maybe he stands at the boiler's face,
With its mouth a-gaping wide ;
Shovellin' coal in the sickening heat,
For steam must not subside ;

Dirty and greasy, he sees it through,
And nobly grafts his shift ;
But aching limbs and parching throat,
Are his ere he turns adrift—

To his rough bark hut, with its comfortless hearth,
And ease of a bag-bunk rest ;
His tucker, the worst that may be found,
And water bad at its best.
Away from family and comforts of home,
Where man's accounted a fool ;
Unless an adept at swear and drink,
And one in a two-up school

Fighting the battle of life amain,
Battling for self-respect ;
For sake of wife's and children's lives,
He puts up with neglect.
Oh, what is life to such as he ?
Bereft of comfort all ;
His life a monotonous round of toil,
And any day shoved to the wall.

So here's my hand to the toiler grim,
That's off by the Bathurst Mail ;
Away to sweat in the hard-fought life,
With spirits that never fail.
May the kind fates grant him many years,
Of rest 'neath the Bathurst dome ;
A recompense due to the battler true,
That's working away from home.

FIRIN' ON THE MAIL.

WHEN the night is dark and stormy,
And you've had your sleep and spell ;
Call-boy's light thro' window's shining,
Soon you'll bid your home farewell ;
And you give a sleepy " Right O."
Ere you hear his warning shout ;
Quickly sling the blankets from you,
Light the glim, and tumble out.

With a numbness in your brain,
Still you've got to fire the train ;
Tho' number forty's not too bad to fire ;
With your tucker on your back,
To the sheds you quickly pack,
And console yourself that you're as tough as wire.

But your mate is kind of decent,
Not too proud to lend a hand ;
And your engine's chest is healthy,
Tho' on the track it isn't grand ;
Waste and wood now blazin' cheer'ly
While you whistle some old tune ;
Soon the sweat is porin' off you,
Tho' the night's in freezin' June.

With a bang you smash the coal,
Throw it gently in the hole ;
Soon you know you'll shovel in with might and
main ;

BEAUTIFUL BATHURST AND OTHER VERSES.

Wish you had a cooler job,
But you're not the man to sob ;
Tho' the clouds are spitting spiteful drops of rain.

Then you start to do the oilin',
With a smoky naked light ;
And dodge around a dozen times,
Just to see that all is right ;
Soon the gauge above is showing,
Full one sixty pounds of steam ;
On the main road to the station,
Off you go, but not to dream.

For you're shovellin' in the coal,
While the city folk patrol,
Up and down the busy station with it's galaxy
of light ;
Till upon the chilly air,
Rings and bell for "All in there ;"
Then thro' clouds of steam she's forging forward
to the night.

Soon you're rushing through the darkness,
Nearly sixty miles an hour,
With a fire-box like a furnace,
How she throbs with mighty power ;
And you cast a glimpse behind you,
Myriad lights gleam from your train ;
Then you grip your shovel firmly,
And you coal her up again.

BEAUTIFUL BATHURST AND OTHER VERSES.

Humans packed in comfort there,
Nought of danger think or care ;
 Where their work or pleasure calls them they are
 bound ;
And you're proud to think that they
Trust you as you make headway ;
 Glad yourself that heart and nerves are sound.

Whistling up to endless platforms,
 Off again in windy gust ;
Now you're rumbling thro' a tunnel
Sickening heat and smoke and dust ;
When you think you're like to perish,
 In fresh air again you go ;
See the lights of distant stations,
 Beckon in their starry glow.

Fire-box doors are open wide,
Well you know that her inside's
 Fainting for another feed of coal ;
Then your driver takes a hand,
Good old mate—a masterhand—
 And you to the mountain station slowly roll.

See the carriage doors are opened,
 Out they tumble all pell-mell ;
And refreshments—soup or whisky—
 Sinking till the warning bell ;

BEAUTIFUL BATHURST AND OTHER VERSES.

While you quickly fill her boiler,
And well oil the heated parts ;
See about your tea and tucker,
P'raps a minute ere she starts.

And your graft demands the cheer,
For your stomach's rumbling queer ;
And you've still got many miles ahead, altho'—
Thoughts of nearing to the goal,
Weary brain and heart console ;
For the strenuous toil and labour you have had
to undergo.

Last, you've reached the city's station,
And they've hooked your engine off ;
Good old girl, she did it gamely,
Stood the journey like a toff ;
Soon you're off to rest at barracks,
Glad to leave the morning lights ;
All indifferent to the city's—
Eager rush and bustling sights.

In you're dreams you're shovelling coal,
From the bunker to the hole ;
Slippin' on the footplate as around the curves
you sail ;
Caught in tunnel's stink and smoke,
Just when you're about to choke ;
Waking up to battle bravely backward on the
mail.

THE SCHOOL OF ARTS.

Oh, Muse glide backward up the stream of time,
To one glad recollection ever dear to me ;
Who disembodied from these sordid days,
Oft' loves to bask in sunshine of sweet memory.

But who could wish to hold the total of his life,
A trivial scene soon from the mind departs ;
But memories few that hold till later years,
And of those few art thou, O School of Arts.

And even now thy lineaments I see,
Fair, standing still, as in the days of old ;
A vision beautiful, what time Phoebus' light—
Robed thee with rapturous flood of liquid gold.

And at thy shrine my panting spirit kneels,
For down the glass fast sink the sands of time ;
Oh read to me thy lessons once again,
Thy lessons true, pure, lofty and sublime.

Tell what the summit of true happiness ?
'Tis not in giddy pleasure, whose pursuit
Palls on the senses soon, and brings remorse—
Like unto Dead Sea fruit.

Nor yet, indeed, in mansions of the great,
In envious fashion, and in worldly spoil,
Which Pride, all selfish, gathered for herself,
And reft from man the fair fruits of his toil.

Nor yet as miser hoarding endless gold,
Itself the idol in this quick-spent life ;
Till the shrunk soul, but hates his fellow men,
Whose aims and his must ever be at strife.

Nor yet to feast—an Epicurean—
All lustful he the slumbering passions fan ;
Nor yet as some ambitious build their throne,
Upon the wreck of some poor fellow man

But O, in pastures of Elysium,
To bid these trifling aims and joys farewell ,
To wander thro' the sweet, transcendent spheres,
Among the Jasmine and the Asphodel.

Those happy days were all in all to me,
When seeking wisdom in the mighty past ;
I sighed, because my restless spirit's wing
Could never hope to skim such regions vast.

And what enjoyment when from thy sanctuary,
I sought the spacious balcony with friends ;
With harmless games the gilded moments passed,
For slighted fellowship I made amends.

And oftimes climbing to the topmost height
Perchance to rest awhile the weary brain ;
To view the purple of the mountain fringe,
Enjoy the stretch of beauteous Bathurst Plain.

Or there, perhaps, a sweetheart's trysting place,
In purple night the sweets of love to taste ;
To watch the tingling stars grow livid at the sight,
As when my arm encircled her fair waist.

In fancy, oft those days come back to me.
And feelings grateful seize the gloomy soul ;
Oh, may posterity e'er attend thy course,
And increased blessings as the ages roll.

CALLING.

Oh, Bathurst is calling to me,
Her accents are borne on the breeze ;
Across the blue fringe of the plains,
Past mountain and river and leas ;
Her voice hath the sound of reproach,
That biddeth an errant return ;
And tear drops are dimming the eye,
For my heart for the city doth yearn.

Ah, Bathurst still calleth to me,
In sad, stricken accents and low ;
But my soul is ecstatic with joy,
For back to her bosom I go ;
A thousand remembrances throng,
They burn like a fire in the brain ;
For here am I—coming at last—
To Beautiful Bathurst again.

SOUTH BATHURST.

My thoughts to thee—my inmost heart confess,
 To pass thy scenes would nurture bitterness ;
 For oft as child I wandered o'er thy green,
 Swam in translucent streams—with sun a-sheen—
 Plucked from the briars the acid, hair-pipped fruit,
 And felt within—a Monarch absolute—
 How often wandering o'er the bald faced hill,
 With catapult in hand—to try my skill—
 Felt in the downy nests—which braved the storm,
 On slender stems—their shapes all multiform :
 Fierce thirst attacked, I made for yonder creek,
 O'er burning sand, for hidden waters seek ;
 And scooped and scooped, with fingers white and
 sore,
 Till in the spring drops trickled more and more ;
 Quite close the orchard with umbrageous shades,
 I clambered o'er its fence, with wild comrades ;
 And snatched in fear the fruit unripe and green,
 When none but God looked down upon the scene ;
 Sped o'er the town, and thro' God's Acre strode,
 Sought 'neath the vaulted tomb new sight's abode ;
 Plucked the sweet lilies flowering o'er the graves,
 Scattered their petals, nothing boyhood saves ;
 Listened enraptured to the urchin's tale,
 Of wondrous sights seen in the graveyard's pale ;
 Of convicts who'd been buried long ago,
 It must be true—his brother told him so—
 Some e'en interred, said he, with rope-clenched
 neck,

A ghastly ringlet for the throat to deck ;
Now in the place of grave yard stands a park,
Close by a parson's house—a handsome mark—
Relieves the dun asperities around,
And gives a comelier aspect to the ground.

THE BATHURST GIRLS.— A TOAST.

HERE's to the girls with the rippling curls,
And cheeks of pink and white ;
With cherry lips and starry eyes,
That shine with love's true light.

May they ever bloom as new-blown rose,
To soothe us when in pain ;
And ease the heart's sigh, when trouble is nigh,
With sweets of love again.

THE STATUARY.

“ A thing of beauty is a joy forever.”

—KEATS.

OH, beauteous, half-veiled female forms divine,
Cut in the chilly depths of marbled stone ;
Lorn goddesses within a floral shrine,
Whose beauty tries in vain to reach thine own ;

BEAUTIFUL BATHURST AND OTHER VERSES.

Blanched hues of death, as when the spirit's flown :
Ah, well-a-day, was once thy beauty lit

By glory of twin orbs ? Did the sweet tone
From lips incarnadine flash forth bright wit,
Oh, ye now doomed for years to vulgar eyes to sit ?

I gazed in adoration, thy fair forms

In this frail body fanned no earthly lust :
Beauty's epitome : ye shall survive the storms
Of griefs and fears in animated dust ;

In thy safe keeping some great spirit's trust :

His message to the world of beauty's power,
Sung first by him whose works outlast the gust
Of time, like to stars set in Heaven's bower :
Shall stand till this revolving sphere's last
breathing hour.

Fast burn the train of mind's associations,

And let me mark fresh beauties all around ;
Fair flowers like souls with gentle aspirations,
Fair wreathed fountains, with their rippling sound ;
Lakelet, birds, fish, to this park's fame redound :

Yet, wider still—fair plains and purpled moun-
tain bar,
The roseate shafts of morn, and crimson sunset
wound

In cloudy veils, and evening's shining star ;
And argent crescent moon, all things of beauty are.

BEAUTIFUL BATHURST AND OTHER VERSES.

Fast fading forms in stone, oh days of stress,
Our souls are bound in chains, we sink and
mourn,
Too soon thy name's forgotten—oh, with bitterness.
For oft thy saddened souls with woe were torn :
Oh, Queens of Phantasy so sad and lorn :
Ye seemed to say that " beauty never dies,"
Eclipsed but for a while, again reborn ;
And brighter far than scenes of earth or skies—
For aye—the love lit glances from fair women's
eyes.



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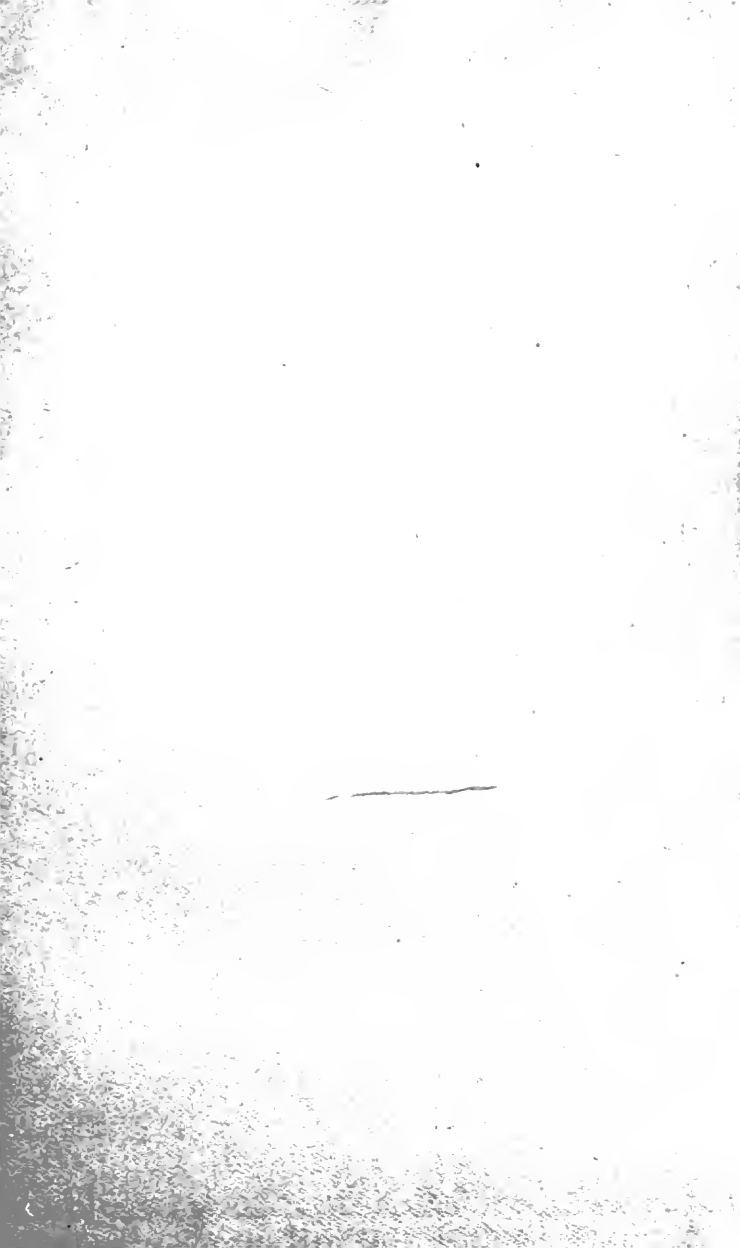
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